



Lewes District Council  
&  
Eastbourne Borough Council

Pre application advice  
for planning and related applications

GUIDANCE NOTE

Adopted April 2017

Revised September 2018

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## Advice Note - The Pre Application Advice Service

### **Purpose of the note**

This note sets out the details of, and procedures for using, our pre application advice service and our enhanced pre application advice service using a Planning Performance Agreement.

### **What is pre application advice?**

This is advice given to anyone who wishes to carry out development within the Eastbourne Borough or Lewes District Council administrative areas, for planning and related developments.

Pre application advice in relation to Building Control matters should be referred to:

[The East Sussex Building Control Partnership](#) for proposals within the Eastbourne administrative area; or

[Lewes Building Control](#) for proposals within the Lewes administrative area.

### **Pre Application Planning Advice given will usually cover:**

- the merits of the development proposed, offering a headline view on whether it will receive officer support
- the relevant policies against which the proposal will be assessed
- who to engage with in the local community as you develop your proposal; and
- the processes involved should you proceed with an application

### **What are the benefits of getting pre application advice?**

It will:

- Identify those schemes which have little or no realistic chance of getting planning permission and highlight any issues. This will save time and money on a scheme that are unlikely to get planning permission
- Set out the key issues that the proposed development will need to address



- Identify community and other related groups and/or elected members who you should be involving in developing your scheme
- Provide help on how to resolve any potential issues or mitigate any possible impacts before the application is submitted, and so make the process of getting planning permission smoother
- In the case of 'Major' applications, establish the benefits of using a Planning Performance Agreement
- Give you the scope of information (from the Local List) that you would need to make a planning application, so that when you submit the application you have a bespoke validation list.
- Start to build and establish a relationship with the Caseworkers/Specialist Advisors and other council officers (e.g. internal consultees) who will make up the Pre Application/Development Team.

### **What is the Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) Service?**

This is an enhanced Pre Application Enquiry service offered on a selected range of significant major development projects. There is no definition of what type of development falls into this category, but would include developments that propose:

- More than 100 dwellings
- Over 10,000 sq m of commercial space, or
- Sites of 2 hectares or more

The service is charged under a separate regime and can only be delivered with an extra payment to the usual Pre-Application Advice charges. The extra payment will be used to secure extra resources to either undertake the PPA process or to free up time for in-house officers.

### **Applicants using the PPA Service can expect:-**

- A dedicated Specialist Advisor or equivalent
- A meeting with the Lead officer for the service area
- A bespoke and agreed PPA
- A targeted planning committee date
- Programmed meetings on a 4 week cycle
- Use of the Development Team, such as a meeting with stakeholders
- The resources to present the proposal at the Lewes & Eastbourne Design Review Panel

- The opportunity for a Members and Stakeholder meeting; a meeting with elected members and representatives of the local community
- A pre submission audit to assess your final application package is complete for validation purposes, to ensure registration with 24 hours, and that the application is complete for a decision to be made

### **What won't Pre Application advice do?**

It will not guarantee an outcome. We cannot agree to give planning or listed building consent through pre-application. We also cannot give a formal view of planning committee. This is because:

a) applications are subject to a wider consultation process than a pre application enquiry, and issues may come to light that are not known at the time of giving the advice

b) the views given will be current at the time of giving the advice but changes in planning circumstances and policy will need to be taken into account when the application is decided

c) larger, more complex applications will be decided by a planning committee made up of elected members. Whilst the committee will have an officer report and recommendation to consider, members may decide to give different weight to key issues and other material considerations, in arriving at their decision

An application for pre-application advice can also not confirm if development would constitute permitted development. If you require formal confirmation that works or development constitute permitted development or do not require planning permission you will need to apply for a lawful development certificate.

### **On what cases do we offer the pre application advice service?**

The service is available for all types of development, including all new build residential and commercial proposals (both Major and Minor developments).

While we would always encourage engagement with us at the earliest opportunity, the Pre-Application Advice Service can also consider schemes at outline stage and at the 'Reserved Matters' stage.

For a full list of the types of development covered by this process see Appendix 3

### **Will the enquiry be confidential?**

We have found that it is best to include the local community in pre-application discussion as proposals are being developed, and will encourage this to happen at an early stage. To assist in this, we may let the Parish Council, Neighbourhood Plan representatives and Ward Councillors know that a Pre-Application enquiry has been received.

### **Is there a charge for the service?**

Charges are calculated on a cost recovery basis, and this includes pre application enquiries made after an application has been refused.

The cost depends on the scale of the development proposed and the level of service. The charge will be higher, for example, if the development team approach is needed or the planning performance agreement approach is used.

The full range of costs is outlined in the charging schedule in appendix 3. Fees are calculated according to the amount of work hours dealing with the application will take.

Please note that the service is VAT liable and subject to VAT at the usual rate of 20%.

Charging is discretionary and there are certain circumstances where we can waive the charges.

Please let us know if the development concerns:

- Preserved trees/trees in Conservation Area
- Charities, community groups, charitable trust or not for profit organisation
- Works for disabled access or modification
- Advise to town or parish councils (applicable within Lewes District Council area only)
- Regulation 5 notifications for telecommunications/broadband
- Schemes which will provide 100% affordable housing

In all cases there will be an upfront charge which will cover the costs up to and including us providing our written advice, and the review meeting if needed. An additional charge will be due if further meetings are required.



For the larger and more complex cases, such as those where we use the Development Team or arrange a Development Management Forum, there will be an extra charge on an hourly rate. We will always let you know if this is likely to happen and will not start any work that will incur additional costs without your consent.

If you require further advice after receiving our response and after we have closed the case, if circumstances have changed for example, there will be further costs. If this is the case we will tell you before undertaking any work.

For very significant developments we offer the opportunity for an informal discussion in advance of submitting a pre-application enquiry. This is known as an inception meeting and will be with the lead officer for the service area. This meeting is without charge and dependent on the general parameters of the proposed development being provided.

The inception meeting could be either a telephone conversation or a meeting, and will be limited to a maximum of 1 hour.

The purpose of the phone call or meeting is to identify the issues and information that will be considered by the council's pre application team as well as identifying any fundamental obstacles to progressing the proposal and to lead you through the pre-application enquiry process, including how what format we would like the enquiry submitted in.

### **What will the advice look like?**

The advice will be in writing, and for most development proposals we will use a standard template (see Appendix 2) although in some of the more complex cases this could be supported by a letter and/or a meeting, which could be on site.

If appropriate, part of the advice will include a bespoke check list of all the items needed to validate the proposed application.

In all cases when preparing the advice we will be guided by what you have told us about your proposed development and by what you want the response to cover. I would therefore advise you submit as much information regarding your proposals as possible.

### **Service Standards**

Our aim is to respond as quickly as is possible, and targets are:

- Major Applications and proposals using the Premium Pre-Application Service with a PPA: to be agreed on a case by case basis. An initial contact should be made within 5 working days to agree a time table for the response.
- Medium Pre Application Enquiry: 25 working days from receipt of valid information
- Householder Pre Application: 20 working days from the receipt of valid information

### **How can I apply to use this service?**

You can apply and pay for a pre-application enquiry through our website at <https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/development-management/apply-for-pre-application-planning-advice/>

Remember that you must provide enough information to support your request and the amount of information will depend on how complex your proposal is. If you require an inception meeting for a super major development please email [customerfirst@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk](mailto:customerfirst@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk)

### **Appendices**

1. Steps in the process
2. Pre Application Advice – Template
3. Charging Schedule



## **APPENDIX 1 – STEPS IN THE PROCESS**

### **Applicants/Agents will:**

- Fill out the advice request form online setting out what you want from the enquiry and including enough information for your proposal to be easily understood.
- Pay the required fee online at the time of submission

### **We will then:**

- Record the pre-application enquiry on our database
- Acknowledge receipt of the enquiry and the fee
- Allocate the case to a Specialist Advisor or Caseworker as appropriate
- Ideally the officer who deals with the enquiry will be the case officer if a full planning application is submitted. If for some reason this is not possible a new case officer may be allocated at the planning application stage. If this happens, as long as there has been no change in planning circumstances, we will stand by the pre-application advice.
- We may circulate the details of the enquiry to local ward members and to the Neighbourhood Planning representatives and parish and town councils if considered necessary.

### **The Case Officer will:**

- Contact you and let you know how the enquiry will be responded to, if other than in writing, within the time frame specified. This could include arranging a meeting, which could take place on site
- If the case is one where there are additional costs are required, we will contact you and let you know
- Respond to the enquiry in writing on or before the time frame specified in the charging schedule unless agreed otherwise.

## Appendix 2 – Pre App Advice Report Template Full Response

Lewes and Eastbourne  
Pre Application Advice  
Report

Site Address:

Ref No:

### **We understand your proposal to be....**

In this section of the report we will set out what we think you want to do

### **Summary of Advice (correct at the time of giving the advice**

In this section we will summarise the advice

### **Things that you need to be aware of....**

In this section we will explain if there are any previous planning applications or site issues that you need to take into account. We will also say if the development is liable for CIL

### **Planning Policies that you need to be aware of....**

In this section we will list the main planning policies that are relevant to your proposal

### **Our initial headline views about your proposal....**

In this section we will say what we think about your proposal. This will include:

- our view about the likelihood of permission being granted
- a schedule of the documents/supporting information that you will need at validation (this could be a separate document)
- advice on how the application should be submitted (eg electronic or paper and how many copies/size of files etc.)

### **Things we recommend you do. ...**

In this section we will explain what you should do next. This may include advice on :

- how to improve your proposal to make it acceptable; and
- Pre application engagement with the local community and
- Who you should consult prior to submitting an application

### **Information we consider is necessary to accompany your planning application....**

In this section we will provide a checklist of the documents we consider necessary for the application to be valid.

## APPENDIX 3 Charging Schedule

Application Types	Application Category	Cost excl VAT	Cost Inc VAT	Level of Service delivery	Normal response times
Householder	Householder Schemes			Written advice	
	works or alterations to an existing residential dwelling, including extensions, garages, satellite dishes, garden structures etc.	£12.50	<b>£15</b>	Site visit to take place only if deemed necessary by Case Worker/Specialist Advisor	20 Working days from receipt of valid information.
Medium	Listed Building Schemes			Written advice	
	works to listed building (where no planning permission will be required)	£12.50	<b>£15</b>	Site visit to take place only if deemed necessary by Specialist Advisor	25 Working days from receipt of valid information.
Medium	Other			Written advice, site visit and up to 1 meeting.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advertisements;</li> <li>• Telecommunications (excl Reg 5 applications);</li> <li>• Changes of use where no operational development (except residential/holiday)</li> <li>• Renewable Energy – (including Wind turbines etc.) up to site area of 1ha</li> </ul>			£60 per additional meeting and written advice	25 Working days from receipt of valid information.
Medium		£75	<b>£90</b>	Site visit/meeting to take place only if deemed necessary by Case Officer	
				Written advice, site visit and 1 meeting.	
	Residential schemes for 1 - 2 dwellings including replacement of a single dwelling			£60 per additional meeting.	25 Working days from receipt of valid information.
				Site visit/meeting to take place only if deemed necessary by Case Officer	
Medium		£150	<b>£180</b>	Written advice, site visit and 1 meeting.	
	SMALL MINOR				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All residential schemes for the change of use to or erection of 3 - 5 dwellings (or holiday lets) or conversion of building(s) to 3 - 5 residential units (or holiday lets);</li> <li>• All minor non-residential schemes for new buildings</li> </ul>	£250	<b>£300</b>	£60 per additional meeting.	25 Working days from receipt of valid information.
				Site visit/meeting	



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Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-residential buildings or extensions up to 499 sq. m floorspace</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">MINOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential proposals (including holiday lets) involving the erection of or change of use to between 6 – 9 residential units</li> <li>• Non-residential 500 – 999sq m floorspace</li> </ul>			<p>(s) to take place only if deemed necessary by Case Officer</p> <p>Written advice. site visit and Up to 2 meetings.</p> <p>£120 per additional meeting.</p> <p>Site visit/meeting (s) to take place only if deemed necessary by Case Officer</p>	25 Working days from receipt of valid information.
		£450	<b>£540</b>		
Major	<p style="text-align: center;">SMALL SCALE MAJOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential 10-30 houses or site area up to 2 ha;</li> <li>• Non-residential 1,000 – 4,999 sq. m or site area between 1 -2 ha</li> <li>• Renewable Energy – (including Wind turbines etc.) site area of between 1 – 2 ha</li> </ul>	£900	<b>£1,080</b>	<p>Written advice, site visit and up to 2 meetings £200 per additional meeting</p> <p>Site visit/meeting (s) to take place only if deemed necessary by Case Officer</p>	Initial contact made within 5 working days to agree timetable.
Major	<p style="text-align: center;">MEDIUM SCALE MAJOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential 31- 149 houses or site area 2 – 4 ha;</li> <li>• Non-residential 5,000 – 9,999 sq. m floor space or site area between 2-4 ha</li> <li>• Renewable Energy – (including Wind turbines etc.) site area of between 2-4 ha</li> </ul>	£1,800	<b>£2,160</b>	<p>Written advice, site visit and up to 4 meetings *£360 per additional meeting</p> <p>Site visit/meeting (s) to take place only if deemed necessary by Case Officer</p>	Initial contact made within 5 working days to agree timetable.
Major	<p style="text-align: center;">LARGE SCALE MAJOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential greater than 150 houses or site area greater than 4ha;</li> <li>• Non-residential 10,000sqm floorspace or site area greater than 4ha;</li> <li>• All Environmental Impact</li> </ul>	£3,600	<b>£4,320</b>	<p>Written advise, site visit and up to 6 meetings*, *£500 per additional meeting</p> <p>Site visit/meeting</p>	Initial contact made within 5 working days to agree timetable.



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	Development • Renewable Energy – (including Wind turbines etc.) site area of greater than 4 ha			(s) to take place only if deemed necessary by Case Officer	
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